[Translation]

Pending Projects of Gauge Conversion

4067. SHRI KACHARU BHAU RAUT :
SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether several proposals regarding conversion of metre gauge lines into broad guage lines in Maharashtra are pending with the Government for approval;

(b) if so, the details of each project alongwith the amount of funds allocated therefor;

(c) whether any new project has been taken up for gauge conversion;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the criteria adopted for their selection;

(e) the time by which these projects are likely to be completed; and

(f) the present position regarding laying of new railway lines in Maharashtra?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e). Do not arise.

(f) The present position regarding laying of new railway lines in Maharashtra is as under :

Name	Present Status	Target Date for Completion
1. Amravati-Narkhed	Land acquisition is in progress. Part work on earthwork in Narkhed Yard is in progress. Work on new station building at Amravati and foot-over-bridge at Narkhed is in full swing.	2001-02
2. Panvel-Karjat	Work has beeen cleared by Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs. Tenders for earth-work, minor and major bridges and single line tunnel have been invited.	1998-99

[English]

Upgradation of Suburban Train Facilities in Karnataka

4068. SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to upgrade the suburban train facilities in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of new trains proposed to be provided stoppage at Bangalore, Hubli, Bijapur, Davangere, Gulbarga, Hassan, Mangalore and Mysore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c). Improvement of travel facilities, including for suburban travel, is an ongoing process on Indian Railways subject to traffic justification, availability of resources (including DMU/Push Pull/EMU/MEMU rakes for suburban services) and operational feasibility. There is no proposal at present to introduce additional trains for suburban commuters in Karnataka. However, as and when new trains are introduced in future serving Karnataka, provision of the stoppages at Bangalore, Hubli, Bijapur, Davengere, Gulbarga, Hassan, Mangalore and Mysore can be provided subject to traffic justification.

[Translation]

First Air Taxi Service in M.P.

4069. SHRI DADA BABURAO PARANJPE :
SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government is aware of the fact that Sam Verma has started a company on January 7, 1992 under the name Continental Aviation Private Limited for providing the first air taxi service in Madhya Pradesh by private sector and after operating the air service for eighth months the company winded up the business on May 22, 1993 after duping crores of rupees from National Airports Authority of India and other institutions;

(b) if so, the reasons for failure of this air service;

(c) the amount of loss incurred to the Government on account of this company; and

(d) the efforts being made by the Government for recovering the due amount?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) Permit to operate air taxi services was

issued to M/s. Continental Aviation Pvt. Ltd. on 17th June, 1991. The Permit was valid for one year.

(b) The Company did not seek renewal in the validity of the said Permit.

(c) The amount of dues outstanding against the Company is as under :

	Amount (Rs. in lakhs)	As on
Customs authorities (Inland Air Travel Tax) -	74.86	17.12.96
Airports Authority of India (AAI) -	71.21	31.10.96

(d) The Customs authorities had distrained/arrested one aircraft of the Company at Bombay in February 1995 for recovery of the outstanding dues. On a suit filed by the Tourism Finance Corporation of India Ltd., the High Court at Delhi has issued direction in January, 1995 not to dispose off the aircraft and also not to create any third party interest. On filing an intervention by the customs authorities for vacation of the aforesaid order, the Hon'ble High Court has transferred the case to Debt Recovery Tribunal where the matter is still pending decision. AAI has a lien on the aircraft and a court case has been filed to recover the dues.

Submission of Claims for Loss of Wagons

4070. SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VERMA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of coal wagons lost till 1994 for which claims have been submitted by the Uttar Pradesh State Electricity Board;

(b) the reasons for not receiving wagons loaded with coal by the Uttar Pradesh State Electricity Board;

(c) whether the Railway officers have sold the coal somewhere;

(d) if so, the names of officers, Station-wise involved in this regard; and

(e) the time by which the payment is likely to be made in regard to all the claims of Uttar Pradesh State Electricity Board?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b). A statement is attached.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The claims and counter claims for short supply/ excess supplied coal wagons are offset by means of periodical reconcilisation, which is a continuous exercise.

STATEMENT

Coal rakes booked for Power Houses are normally not interfered with except in very exceptional circumstances like accidents, breaches, civil commotion, heavy congestion etc. or for meeting the demands of various Power Houses in the broader national interest, to avoid disruption to power generation. In such circumstances, the rakes of coal booked for a particular Power House are diverted to other Power House. As on June, 1996 4962 coal wagons have been short supplied to Uttar Pradesh State Electricity Board's Power Houses located on Northern and Central Railways while on Eastern and North Eastern Railways 7405 coal wagons have been excess supplied to them. Thus railways have supplied 2443 excess coal wagons to Uttar Pradesh State Electricity Board over and above their due wagons.

[English]

Electronic Telephone Exchanges

4071. DR. RAM LAKHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have set up electronic telephone exchanges in the country during the year 1995-96;

(b) the names of States where electronic telephone exchanges are proposed to be set up during 1996-97;

(c) whether any decision has been taken regarding setting up of electronic telephone exchanges at some places of Bhind; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During 1996-97, electronic exchanges are proposed to be set up in all States of the country.

(c) No, Sir. There is no such proposal at present.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

[Translation]

Channel of Doordarshan

4072. SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the number and names of Doordarshan channels at present;

(b) the amount earned from each channel during 1995-96;

(c) whether the Government have any proposal to increase the number of chennels; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?